



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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March 18, 2003

To: Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Chair
Supervisor Don Knabe, Chair Pro Tem
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Jon W. Fullinwider
Chief Information Officer

Subject: **BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING PROGRAM QUESTIONS**

This memorandum is in response to questions raised by Supervisor Molina at the March 4, 2003, Board meeting regarding the County's Business Continuity Planning (BCP) Program. The responses have jointly been developed and reviewed by the Chief Administrative Office/Office of Emergency Management (CAO/OEM), the Auditor-Controller (A-C), and Internal Services Department (ISD).

Background

BCP provides a formal process to deal with the loss of critical services, facilities, resources, or operational processes in the event of an unexpected outage or significant disruptive event. At its core is a framework providing structure for the identification and compilation of departmental information allowing for the planned recovery of critical services. When fully implemented, BCP will compliment the County's existing emergency operations plan(s), providing departmental and countywide visibility into the scope and actions required to identify and restore critical services during an extended disruptive event.

It is important to note that BCP is a business process and not a one time event. Business continuity plans must be updated, validated and tested on an annual basis. As business processes change or new services are added/modified, BCP plans must be modified to reflect the operational changes as the change occurs.

BCP Questions

The following are specific responses to Board questions:

Q. What are the actions required by departments to complete a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) framework and to implement their BCP plans?

- A. Completing and Implementing BCP Plans – The BCP framework is a structured methodology that defines the steps, processes and deliverables necessary to develop and implement departmental business continuity plans. Once the BCP framework has been developed and validated, each department will be held responsible for using the framework during the development of their respective BCP plans. The plans will reflect critical services, required recovery times, required resources, technology requirements and detailed plans/actions for the recovery of services in the event the plans have to be executed.

The following chart identifies examples of actions that departments will be required to perform in order to develop and implement their business continuity plans.

EXAMPLES OF DEPARTMENTAL BCP ACTIONS

| ASSESS | DEVELOP | IMPLEMENT | MAINTAIN/TEST |
|---|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and document critical time-sensitive services and processes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop alternative strategies for resumption and recovery of time-sensitive services and processes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop business continuity plan based on the selected business continuity strategies. The plan would document actions required to execute resumption and recovery operations effectively. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a plan exercise/test program. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and document recovery resource requirements (e.g. people, facilities, equipment, technology, vital records, etc.). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify implementation and ongoing costs for each alternative strategy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a departmental recovery organization. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish training requirements. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and document critical recovery timeframes and priorities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select business continuity strategies for time-sensitive services and processes based on level of protection and cost of maintaining capability. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define departmental BCP recovery teams and identify team tasks and procedures. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and run sample exercises/tests. Evaluate plan effectiveness and make modifications if necessary. |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct plan reviews. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define plan update and maintenance procedures. |

Once departmental plans are completed, they will be reviewed by CAO/OEM to assess compliance with requirements identified in the BCP framework.

Q. What are examples of the tasks and deliverables to be completed by consultant?

- A. The development of the BCP framework will be accomplished with the assistance of a consultant engaged as a part of selecting a BCP software solution. The consultant will be engaged to modify the generalized framework provided by the selected BCP software solution based on an assessment of County requirements. The framework will provide structure and describe procedures and processes for developing departmental business continuity plans. Additionally, a glossary of terms will be provided documenting common terminology and definitions. The consultant will also assist in organizing and conducting training for departments on the BCP framework and its use within the selected software solution.

We estimate that \$400,000 in funding is required to cover the acquisition or internal development of BCP software and consulting services to assist in the development of a formal framework.

Q. What is the type of software to be purchased?

- A. The decision to purchase commercially available BCP software will expedite the development and implementation of the County's BCP program. During our analysis leading to the development of the BCP report, we reviewed two industry leading software products and subsequently met with one of the vendors to review product capabilities. In selecting a software solution, we will acquire a web-based product designed for large enterprise operations with a strong focus on framework flexibility, integration, ad-hoc reporting, resource compatible database support and collaborative planning tools.

Q. How will the BCP program be coordinated with the Departments?

- A. The CAO/OEM will coordinate the County's overall BCP Program. Under County code, CAO/OEM is presently charged with developing and maintaining response and/or recovery of County operations in times of disaster. The CAO/OEM will convene a Recovery and Business Continuity Planning Task Force to be jointly chaired by CAO/OEM and CIO. The task force will develop policies and processes to implement a countywide BCP program, using planning guidance developed by the consultant. The Emergency Management Council will provide executive oversight, and the Chief Administrative Officer will provide direction to departments to ensure the highest level of executive support.

Departments will be responsible for developing their own BCP plans. Departments will identify BCP coordinators to ensure departmental support for the BCP process. Department BCP plans will be reviewed by the Office of Emergency Management and approved by the Emergency Management Council.

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OEM, with support of the task force will develop a countywide plan, which will ensure continuity between departmental plans. This plan will identify and establish countywide recovery priorities. Also, it will identify opportunities to develop alternate recovery solutions that can be accessed by all County departments in the event of a major service disruption.

The attached chart reflects the emergency management planning responsibilities as described in the County Code. We will use this structure to coordinate the County's BCP efforts.

If you have questions, please contact me at (213) 974-2008, or in my absence, your staff may contact Bill Butler, CAO/OEM, at (323) 980-2258 or Gregory Melendez, of my staff, at (213) 974-1710.

JWF:JW:
GM:ygd

Attachment

c: I/T Board Deputies
Emergency Preparedness Board Deputies
Chief Administrative Officer
Chief Administrative Office/Office of Emergency Management
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Director, Internal Services Department
Auditor-Controller
Chair, Information Systems Commission

Emergency Management Planning in Los Angeles County

